

the condition of education 2006



INDICATOR 7

Language Minority School-Age Children

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2006*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2006*, visit the NCES website (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.sap?pubid=2006071>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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Elementary/Secondary Education

Language Minority School-Age Children

The number of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home more than doubled between 1979 and 2004.

Between 1979 and 2004, the number of school-age children (ages 5–17) who spoke a language other than English at home increased from 3.8 to 9.9 million, or from 9 to 19 percent of all children in this age group (see supplemental table 7-1). The number of school-age children who spoke English with difficulty also increased, from 1.3 million (or 3 percent of all 5- to 17-year-olds) to 2.8 million (or 5 percent) over the same time period. However, of those who spoke a language other than English at home, the percentage who spoke English with difficulty decreased, from 34 to 28 percent.

There was an 18 percent increase in the number of school-age children between 1979 and 2004. In contrast, during this period, the number of such children who spoke a language other than English at home increased by 162 percent, and the number who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty increased by 114 percent.

Spanish was the language most frequently spoken at home by both those who spoke a language other than English at home and by those who

spoke English with difficulty (see supplemental table 7-2). In 2004, of those who spoke Spanish at home, a higher percentage of 5- to 9-year-olds (37 percent) than 10- to 17-year-olds (24 percent) spoke English with difficulty.

The percentages of school-age children living in non-English-speaking households varied by race/ethnicity, citizenship, and poverty status in 2004. Five percent of both Black and White school-age children spoke a language other than English at home, compared with 14 percent of American Indian, 63 percent of Asian, and 67 percent of Hispanic school-age children. The percentage of non-U.S. citizens who spoke a language other than English at home (89 percent) was higher than the percentages of naturalized U.S. citizens (62 percent) and U.S.-born citizens (15 percent) who did so. There were no measurable differences between the percentages of poor and near-poor 5- to 17-year-olds whose primary language at home was other than English (28 and 27 percent, respectively), and the percentages of each group were higher than the percentage of nonpoor school-age children (13 percent).

NOTE: Respondents were asked if each child in the household spoke a language other than English at home. If they answered “yes,” they were asked how well each child could speak English. Categories used for reporting were “very well,” “well,” “not well,” and “not at all.” All those who reported speaking English less than “very well” were considered to have difficulty speaking English. In 1994, the survey methodology for the Current Population Survey (CPS) was changed and weights were adjusted. Spanish-language versions of both the CPS and the American Community Survey (ACS) were available to respondents. “Poor” is defined to include those families below the poverty threshold; “near-poor” is defined as 100–199 percent of the poverty threshold; and “nonpoor” is defined as 200 percent or more than the poverty threshold.

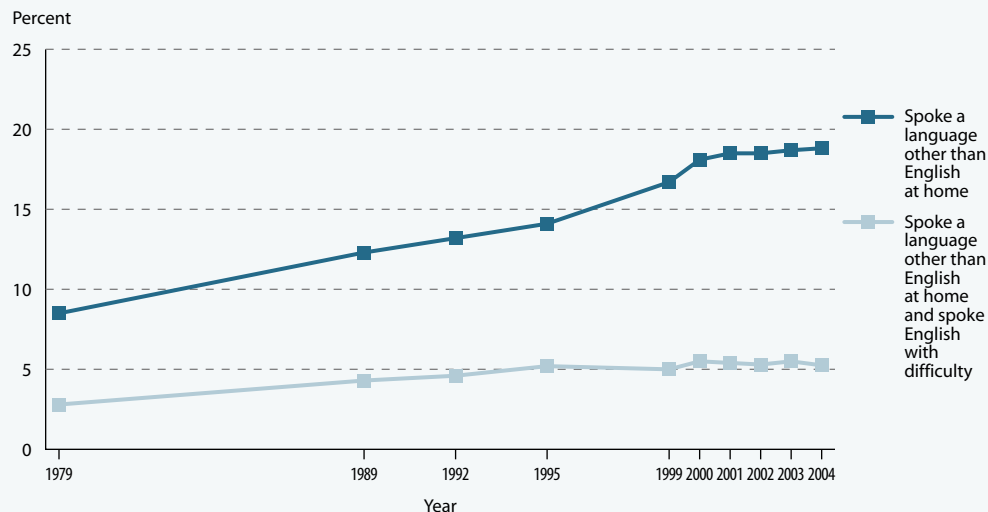
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), 1979 and 1989 November Supplement and 1992, 1995, and 1999 October Supplement and American Community Survey (ACS), 2000–04, previously unpublished tabulations (November 2005).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Notes 1,2,3
Supplemental Tables 7-1,7-2
NCES 2004-009

Federal Interagency Forum on
Child and Family Statistics 2005



LANGUAGE MINORITY: Percentage of 5- to 17-year-olds who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty: Various years, 1979–2004



Language Minority School-Age Children

Table 7-1. Number and percentage of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty: Various years, 1979–2004

Year	Total population ages 5–17 (in millions)	Spoke a language other than English at home				
		Number (in millions)	Percent of total population	Spoke English with difficulty ¹		
				Number (in millions)	Percent of total population	Percent of those who spoke a language other than English at home
1979	44.7	3.8	8.5	1.3	2.8	34.2
1989	42.3	5.2	12.3	1.8	4.3	34.6
1992	47.7	6.3	13.2	2.2	4.6	34.9
1995	47.5	6.7	14.1	2.4	5.2	35.8
1999	52.7	8.8	16.7	2.6	5.0	29.5
2000	52.5	9.5	18.1	2.9	5.5	30.5
2001	53.0	9.8	18.5	2.8	5.4	28.6
2002	53.0	9.8	18.5	2.8	5.3	28.6
2003	53.0	9.9	18.7	2.9	5.5	29.4
2004	52.9	9.9	18.8	2.8	5.3	27.9
Percentage change compared with 1979						
2004	18.3	161.8	121.4	113.6	87.5!	-18.4

! Interpret data with caution (estimates are unstable).

¹ Respondents were asked if each child in the household spoke a language other than English at home. If they answered "yes," they were asked how well each child could speak English. Categories used for reporting were "very well," "well," "not well," and "not at all." All those who reported speaking English less than "very well" were considered to have difficulty speaking English.

NOTE: Spanish-language versions of both the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the American Community Survey (ACS) were available to respondents. In 1994, the survey methodology for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted. Due to differences between the CPS and the ACS, use caution when comparing data before and after 2000. See *supplemental notes 2 and 3* for more information.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), 1979 and 1989 November Supplement and 1992, 1995, and 1999 October Supplement and American Community Survey (ACS), 2000–04, previously unpublished tabulations (November 2005).

Language Minority School-Age Children

Table 7-2. Number and percentage of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty, by selected characteristics: 2004

[Numbers in thousands]									
Spoke a language other than English at home									
Spoke English with difficulty ¹									
Characteristic	Number	Number	Percent of population ²	Total		Ages 5–9		Ages 10–17	
				Number	Percent of population ²	Number	Percent of population ²	Number	Percent of population ²
Total	52,876	9,949	18.8	2,776	5.3	1,343	6.8	1,434	4.3
Language spoken at home									
Spanish	7,091	7,091	100.0	2,080	29.3	1,020	37.3	1,060	24.3
Other Indo-European	1,434	1,434	100.0	345	24.0	156	29.5	188	20.8
Asian/Pacific Islander ³	1,139	1,139	100.0	311	27.3	145	34.7	166	23.0
Other	286	286	100.0	41	14.2	21	17.8	19	11.6
Race/ethnicity ⁴									
White	31,659	1,679	5.3	430	1.4	155	1.4	275	1.4
Black	7,817	367	4.7	92	1.2	34	1.2	58	1.2
Hispanic	9,538	6,432	67.4	1,885	19.8	976	24.9	910	16.2
Mexican	6,432	4,433	68.9	1,423	22.1	767	28.4	656	17.6
Puerto Rican	952	494	51.9	109	11.5	49	13.1	60	10.4
Cuban	219	152	69.2	26	11.7	9	10.7	17	12.4
Dominican	244	219	89.8	69	28.4	27	29.4	42	27.8
Central American	555	472	84.9	121	21.9	60	27.5	62	18.2
South American	382	301	78.6	55	14.4	25	16.6	31	13.1
Other Hispanic	753	362	48.0	82	10.9	39	13.1	43	9.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	2,015	1,266	62.8	336	16.7	161	20.6	175	14.2
American Indian	412	58	14.1	8	1.8	4	2.7	4	1.4
Citizenship									
U.S.-born	50,253	7,754	15.4	1,834	3.7	1,017	5.4	817	2.6
Naturalized U.S. citizen	489	304	62.1	74	15.2	22	19.1	53	14.0
Non-U.S. citizen	2,133	1,891	88.6	868	40.7	304	48.4	564	37.5
Poverty status ⁵									
Poor	9,109	2,549	28.0	903	9.9	444	12.3	459	8.4
Near-poor	11,065	3,030	27.4	900	8.1	463	10.7	437	6.5
Nonpoor	31,913	4,254	13.3	927	2.9	409	3.6	518	2.5
Region									
Northeast	9,422	1,787	19.0	454	4.8	209	6.1	246	4.1
Midwest	11,844	1,239	10.5	374	3.2	162	3.7	212	2.8
South	18,922	2,928	15.5	822	4.3	396	5.6	426	3.6
West	12,688	3,995	31.5	1,127	8.9	577	12.1	550	6.9

¹ Respondents were asked if each child in the household spoke a language other than English at home. If they answered “yes,” they were asked how well each child could speak English. Categories used for reporting were “very well,” “well,” “not well,” and “not at all.” All those who reported speaking English less than “very well” were considered to have difficulty speaking English.

² Percentage of the total population for that particular subgroup. For example, 14.1 percent of all American Indians spoke a language other than English at home, and 1.8 percent of all American Indians spoke a language other than English at home and spoke English with difficulty.

³ Any native language spoken by Asians or Pacific Islanders, which linguists classify variously as Sino-Tibetan, Austroasiatic, or Austronesian languages.

⁴ Black includes African American, Hispanic includes Latino, Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, and American Indian includes Alaska Native. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin unless specified.

⁵ “Poor” is defined to include those families below the poverty threshold; “near-poor” is defined as 100–199 percent of the poverty threshold; and “nonpoor” is defined as 200 percent or more than the poverty threshold.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. A Spanish-language version of the American Community Survey (ACS) was available to respondents. For the states in each region, see *supplemental note 1*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 2004, previously unpublished tabulations (November 2005).

Language Minority School-Age Children

Table S7. Standard errors for the percentage of 5- to 17-year-olds who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty: Various years, 1979–2004

Language ability	1979	1989	1992	1995	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Spoke a language other than English at home	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Spoke a language other than English at home and spoke English with difficulty	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), 1979 and 1989 November Supplement and 1992, 1995, and 1999 October Supplement and American Community Survey (ACS), 2000–04, previously unpublished tabulations (November 2005).

Language Minority School-Age Children

Table S7-1. Standard errors for the number and percentage of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty: Various years, 1979–2004

Year	Total population ages 5–17 (in millions)	Spoke a language other than English at home				
		Number (in millions)	Percent of total population	Spoke English with difficulty		
				Number (in millions)	Percent of total population	Percent of those who spoke a language other than English at home
1979	†	0.06	0.53	0.04	0.53	1.21
1989	†	0.09	0.58	0.05	0.61	1.18
1992	†	0.10	0.55	0.06	0.57	1.08
1995	†	0.10	0.52	0.06	0.55	1.02
1999	†	0.12	0.53	0.07	0.57	0.87
2000	†	0.12	0.21	0.07	0.13	0.60
2001	†	0.08	0.14	0.04	0.08	0.37
2002	†	0.08	0.14	0.04	0.08	0.37
2003	†	0.08	0.14	0.04	0.08	0.37
2004	†	0.08	0.14	0.04	0.08	0.37
Percentage change compared with 1979						
2004	†	4.84	13.86	7.41	35.90	3.07

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), 1979 and 1989 November Supplement and 1992, 1995, and 1999 October Supplement and American Community Survey (ACS), 2000–04, previously unpublished tabulations (November 2005).

Language Minority School-Age Children

Table S7-2. Standard errors for the number and percentage of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty, by selected characteristics: 2004

[Numbers in thousands]									
Characteristic	Spoke a language other than English at home								
	Number	Number	Percent of population	Spoke English with difficulty					
				Total		Ages 5–9		Ages 10–17	
				Number	Percent of population	Number	Percent of population	Number	Percent of population
Total	169.0	79.8	0.14	42.7	0.08	29.8	0.15	30.7	0.09
Language spoken at home									
Spanish	67.7	67.7	†	37.0	0.44	25.9	0.75	26.5	0.53
Other Indo-European	30.7	30.7	†	15.1	0.92	10.2	1.61	11.2	1.10
Asian/Pacific Islander	27.4	27.4	†	14.4	1.07	9.8	1.89	10.5	1.28
Other	13.8	13.8	†	5.2	1.68	3.7	2.85	3.6	2.02
Race/ethnicity									
White	136.6	33.3	0.10	16.9	0.05	10.1	0.09	13.5	0.07
Black	71.0	15.6	0.19	7.8	0.10	4.8	0.17	6.2	0.12
Hispanic	78.2	64.5	0.39	35.2	0.33	25.4	0.56	24.5	0.40
Mexican	64.5	53.8	0.47	30.6	0.42	22.5	0.71	20.8	0.51
Puerto Rican	25.1	18.1	1.32	8.5	0.84	5.7	1.42	6.3	1.03
Cuban	12.1	10.0	2.54	4.1	1.77	2.4	2.78	3.4	2.29
Dominican	12.7	12.0	1.58	6.8	2.35	4.2	3.86	5.3	2.96
Central American	19.2	17.7	1.24	9.0	1.43	6.3	2.47	6.4	1.71
South American	15.9	14.1	1.71	6.0	1.46	4.0	2.48	4.5	1.79
Other Hispanic	22.3	15.5	1.48	7.4	0.92	5.1	1.59	5.3	1.12
Asian/Pacific Islander	36.4	28.9	0.88	14.9	0.68	10.3	1.18	10.8	0.81
American Indian	16.5	6.2	1.40	2.2	0.54	1.6	1.11	1.6	0.58
Citizenship									
U.S.-born	266.9	113.9	0.21	56.0	0.11	41.7	0.22	37.4	0.12
Naturalized U.S. citizen	29.0	22.9	2.87	11.3	2.13	6.1	4.84	9.5	2.34
Non-U.S. citizen	60.3	56.8	0.90	38.6	1.39	22.9	2.61	31.1	1.64
Poverty status									
Poor	76.4	40.9	0.38	24.4	0.25	17.1	0.44	17.4	0.30
Near-poor	83.9	44.6	0.35	24.4	0.21	17.5	0.38	17.0	0.24
Nonpoor	137.0	52.7	0.15	24.7	0.08	16.4	0.14	18.5	0.09
Region									
Northeast	71.6	33.8	0.33	17.3	0.18	11.7	0.33	12.8	0.21
Midwest	80.0	28.4	0.23	15.7	0.13	10.3	0.23	11.8	0.16
South	101.2	43.4	0.21	23.2	0.12	16.2	0.22	16.8	0.14
West	82.4	49.9	0.34	27.1	0.21	19.5	0.39	19.1	0.23

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 2004, previously unpublished tabulations (November 2005).